

## Who's In Your Pipeline?

**pipe•line** (pīp'• līn')*n.* 1. A conduit of pipe used for the conveyance of water, gas or petroleum products. 2. A channel by which information is privately transmitted 3. A line of supply.

Are you filling your pipeline with contacts, giving it the needed time and attention to keep it flowing smoothly?



Are you using your pipeline effectively to turn your contacts into satisfied home buyers and sales growth for you and your company?

As part of my business, I am frequently called on to “Shop our Sales Team”. This is a sales training tool I really enjoy because I get the opportunity to meet and visit with great New Home Sales People while helping them find ways to be more effective at the job they love to do!

I am however, (more often than I would like to say), sadly disappointed with the follow-up that occurs from this planned encounter. Think of how many pipelines I could be in, if folks took the time to listen to me, offer to help me, get the appropriate contact information from me in order to put me in their pipeline..., and then actually do something with it this lead. **Quality leads are the life line of every successful company and Sales Person.**

Home Sales are a result of multiple contacts that are made in many ways and in many different fashions! These very special contacts happen through filling our pipeline and flowing customers through in an orderly system that works for you, feels good to them, and is done in a consistent manner. Getting the needed information from people to fill our pipeline does not let us off the hook of applying the sales process from start to finish. We also need to be aware of the people who are ready, willing and able to purchase today, and not focus completely on the “how may I contact you in the future!” Likewise, we need to make sure our follow-up will also include a regular pipeline cleanout that will remove contacts that only serve to “clog” the system and keep us from focusing on the current and future prospects that are truly in the market. A pipeline that is allowed to become stagnant and clogged will prevent the sales process from flowing smoothly.

People decide who to share their information with and who to buy from, before they decide where to buy. This very important and necessary information is used to build a stronger and better relationship so that we will know our customers more intimately and realize how they would prefer to receive our message and help, whether it is today, tomorrow, next month or even next year. That is the point of *Building Pipelines for a Better Tomorrow*.



It is important to understand why this relationship with our customer and insight into their situations and needs by way of a follow-up pipeline, places us in the position of both PROCESS and PURCHASE. And isn't following up as much of a process as the original execution of the total Sales Process in the Model Home? It just happens that too often it is the

missing link that leaves us in the position of the one being eliminated rather than “the one” being selected!

## Let's Build a Pipeline

- 1) It's pretty simple; Start a conversation, either on site, offline or online, and proceed with great, not empty questions that will provide you with quality information. Having your questions prepared will help you listen to their answers This is the exact information you need to know to enter them into your pipeline. Remember and remark on specifics about them that you can use in future communications; this will make you memorable to them!
- 2) Insert these people and their conversations with their needs, wants and what's going on in their lives, into your pipeline, which is the conduit for the conveyance of your “new and future information”. Stick to your schedule of regular follow-up, to keep the communication flowing on a regular basis. Do not let the pipeline get clogged or stagnant due to lack of attention.
- 3) Be a continual student of learning new information from these people. Make it a goal with every conversation to find out something new that will afford you the luxury of staying in even close contact with them! Allow yourself to converse with them about more than just the possibility of a sale, but rather about them personally. It's ok to keep it personal; that is the basis of a solid working relationship, because guys, **it is personal**, for you and them!
- 4) Follow-up and be persistent but relevant. Don't be impatient: These are big decisions and they take time. What you are doing and how you are using this time is in the strength of your abilities and systems. Make sure you're doing the very best to stay in touch regularly, and provide the correct amount and quality of information that is needed.
- 5) Rate your Customers, as to how often to contact them. Know where they are in their buying cycle. This becomes obvious through your diligence, not desperation, in follow-up! “A” Buyers **ABSOLUTELY** will purchase a home in the very near future. “B” Buyers **BELIEVE** they will purchase a home very soon, but do not have all of their questions answered. “C” Buyers are **CURIOUS**, enough to consider this event and need both more time and more help.



Forming, filling and following-up with your Pipeline is the very root of what we do, not only to be in business, but more importantly to **STAY** in **BUSINESS**! Working a pipeline displays your professionalism and differentiates you from your competition. Don't just turn to your pipeline when business is down. If you use your pipeline as a reserve activity rather than a “best practice” you are missing the point and the people. If you plan on being chosen as “The One”, then build and fill your pipeline now and maintain it regularly...keep it moving!